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TITLE: A Comparison Between A Primary Medical Care Clinic And Family Planning Clinic

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BACKGROUND/OBJECTIVES: According to the World Health Organization, by the year 2000, women will account for most of the new AIDS infections. Considering the increasing number of women at risk for both sexually transmitted diseases and HIV, it is important to identify the characteristics of various target populations. The purpose of this study was to compare women from a Family Planning Clinic (FPC) to women from a Primary Medical Care Clinic PMCC.

METHODS: Women from both the FPC and the PMCC were given questionnaires while they waiting for their appointments. Surgery data was analyzed to determine group differences by using General Liner Model analyses in SPSS version 8.0 for windows.

RESULTS: The mean age was 32 years for PMCC group and 23 years for FPC group. Ethnic diversity varied depending on site, with 46% of sample and 85% of FPC sample being Caucasian. The women in the PMCC sample reported more pregnancies (an average of 3) than the FPC group (an average of 1). More women in the PMCC group indicated being tested for HIV than the FPC group, 85% compared to 52%. They also noted more testing of partners, 75% as compared to 56%. For women with one or more sex partners in the last 12 months, the PMCC group was overall less likely to use birth control but more likely to employ a wider variety of methods (28% used condoms, 21% used self-sterilization, 6% used oral contraception, while 20% used nothing). In contrast, the women in the FPC group overwhelming used oral contraceptives (76%). Women from the PMMC indicated using condoms to prevent STDS and HIV more than women from the FPC, 27% compared to 13%.

CONCLUSIONS: The PMCC sample reported experiencing significantly more sexual abuse (regardless of type), higher rates of adult victimization, engaged in less unprotected oral sex, indicated sexual power, and claimed less positive family functioning than the FPC sample. These results indicate that women from Primary Medical Care Clinics experience more sexual abuse and interpersonal problems, used less birth control, and noted more HIV testing than women from Family Planning Clinics. Interventions need to consider the various characteristics of target populations that can influence a woman's risk for HIV.

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